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The Commonweal

January 5, 1951

SPIRITUAL VOID

ASIA WITHOUT ROOTS

MAX FISCHER

A SECOND SPRING

The Church in China

NICHOLAS MAESTRINI

TEAPOT TEMPEST

The Rutgers Affair

JOHN COGLEY

Volume LIII **15c** *Number 13*

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Idea for a Magazine

If Dante wrote the poetry for The Commonweal, if Thomas Aquinas wrote its editorials, if Giotto furnished us with illustrations for which we could not afford to pay, if every contributor were a canonized saint, if the only invective came from Leon Bloy furious with charity, if the nature editor were Francis of Assisi, if the political editor were Thomas More—and if each issue of the magazine were discussed, censored and approved by the College of Cardinals and Pius XII, then The Commonweal could properly be called a Catholic magazine.

How can a magazine edited by a handful of American Catholic laymen, who cannot speak with the authority of the Church, who cannot speak even with the temporal experience of the Church, without arrogance accept the label "Catholic"? Only in this sense. It is as if the lighting of this world—to every Catholic—gave to everything in the world certain values, certain sharp and peculiar values, a certain shape, a certain density. The world appears to him in a special light.

The words therefore which The Commonweal produces every week are but the little shattered and discolored bits of glass with which it attempts to reflect this light.

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The Commonweal

WEEK BY WEEK

Our Isolationists

THE traditional isolationism of the American Midwest reflects much more than an ingrown sense of geographical security. Friendliness is one of the leading characteristics of Main Street; suspicion of one's neighbor or of the passing stranger is less marked there than it is in more conglomerate, cosmopolitan seaboard areas; Midwesterners are of a peaceable cast and temperamentally averse to forcible interventions. Moreover they are often caught up in community projects of a pioneering sort which allow little excess time or energy for personal involvement in struggles overseas.

Republicans, too, seem more predisposed to isolationism than their Democratic rivals, although this difference was exaggerated out of hand in the strategy of the recent campaign. The Communist advance in Asia made foreign policy the most vulnerable part of the incumbents' record. In many instances Republicans tend to be men of property and therefore opposed to the vast expenditures which involvement in the fate of Western Europe and Asia means under present circumstances. Republicans also account for a good portion of the nation's farmers, whose way of life precludes much engagement in "outside" affairs.

Today American isolationism is not solely a regional and party matter. There are a number of leaders in both parties whose names are intimately associated with the Marshall Plan, the Atlantic Pact and all attendant foreign commitments.

But a new surge of isolationism has followed the setbacks in Korea and the anti-American manifestations in Europe. It can be encountered in all sections of the country, among workers and owners, in all political camps. It reflects war weariness, disillusion with the foreigner, the universal desire to be left to one's own devices and, sporadically, a thoughtful insistence that drastic revision be made of a foreign policy that appears to be working badly.

Unhappily this widespread popular revulsion does little to alter the determining facts. Whatever the tactical mistakes, political and military, American setbacks—and the thwarting of the UN—have resulted primarily from the ruthless expansionism of the USSSR and its Chinese satellite. The United States simply has not yet been able to marshall enough power, in conjunction with our allies, to stem the onward march of the Communists. That is not to say that other diplomatic and military tactics might not have held our mortal adversaries somewhat more in check.

The vulnerability of virtually all American cities, homes and places of work to attacks from the air is the second unpleasant fact that all of us must face in spite of our natural inclinations. If we but realize that the closer to our shores the Russians are able to establish naval and air bases the greater the likelihood of heavy bombing here, we must admit that whatever logic there was for isolationism has long since vanished.

If a breathing space is to be allowed us for the longer pull, the case against withdrawing to our own hemisphere defenses becomes stronger still. We are not engaged with Soviet Russia in a rivalry for dominion over nations. Rather we are attempting to defend ourselves and the remaining free peoples from a Russian effort to subjugate the world. We cannot do this alone. We lack the manpower, the raw materials, the armament and the productive plant to carry on alone.

IN VIEW of the aims of the Kremlin and the present condition of the forces that can be marshalled to oppose its relentless march, isolationism appears as a phenomenon that would hasten the evil day. If it were dominant enough in this country, it might enable the Russians to take over Western Europe without firing a shot.

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• NEXT WEEK •

REV. LEO R. WARD, C.S.C., of Notre Dame University, reviews *Beyond Humanism,* by John Julian Ryan, and touches on several aspects of the relationship between religion and education.

Among them is the degree to which American Catholic institutions impart "the new vital learning;" the connection between education and vocational living; whether a-religious education is a slanted education; and to what extent knowledge should be loved for its own sake.

Russian ambition appears boundless, but if the United States is not weakened from within, that ambition may still be restrained while a European defense force is being built up.

There was a time when the Bolsheviks welcomed all disturbances and all wars everywhere as unparalleled opportunities. Now that they themselves are in power they may view upheavals differently — particularly if foreign intervention is involved. They know full well how violently the Stalin regime is hated in the satellite countries and through the length and breadth of Russia.

So far the Kremlin manifests every disposition to seek its objectives without committing its own armed forces. So far its ambitions have not involved taking on the United States directly. But whether or not the USA and the USSR are soon to come to grips in combat, it would be folly to heed the isolationists and to abandon Europe to the Russians now.

Men

BEHIND every social problem are the men and women who add the all-important human note. If a problem in science or industry arises, it might be the special concern of experts or a professional group. But there is a sense in which sociology involves everyone and almost everything is sociological. And this is true because behind all the charts and statistical tables are living, breathing human beings. Even though a thousand or ten thousand of them may be symbolized by a sexless, faceless figure, human beings remain men and women who cannot be stripped of personality and self.

The ever-present danger of course is that the human elements will get buried in all the words. When men and women become "cases," problems instead of people, difficulties are compounded. Displaced persons, members of racial minorities, the massed populations of occupied countries, the anonymous people on whom bombs drop—at one time or another they have all known what it is to be treated as heads in a herd.

Here among us, it is especially true of the men on the nation's Skid Rows. It is dangerously easy to think of the traditionally dirty, ragged figure of the Bowery as something less than a man, with private feelings, passions, drives, capacities, virtues and sins. It is easy to think of him as a soulless abstraction, with neither past nor future but only this shameful present. Yet this kind of thinking, maybe more than any other single fac-

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tor, has added to the burden of those set off as public failures in our highly competitive society. When men are stripped of self-respect and the ordinary esteem of their fellows, they often find it impossible to carry on as men. The flame of personality can diminish to a tiny flicker among those set apart as the abandoned.

New York City recently took a long step in the right direction in dealing with men from its Bowery. For 50 years the New York authorities, like those in most American cities, have been satisfied with a revolving-door policy. A derelict was arrested for vagrancy, brought to court, sent to jail, released, returned to the Bowery and then arrested for vagrancy again. It was frankly a policy of despair, based on the vicious notion of faceless men beyond redemption.

Under the new program devised by John M. Murtagh, Chief Magistrate of New York City, and Raymond M. Hilliard, Welfare Commissioner, a rehabilitation center has been set up at Hart Island. Through medical aid, personal guidance, social service and vocational assistance, an attempt will be made to restore men to family life, normal employment and a more wholesome way of life. A special study is being made of alcoholism, and its cure, in connection with the work of the center.

It would be overly sanguine to expect wholesale results from these efforts. Not all men will respond to the care the center offers; perhaps most will continue as before. And because Skid Rows seem to be indigenous to our industrial society, there will be new ones to take the place of those who succeed in getting off the Bowery. There will still remain the hopelessly unemployable, the victims of shock, the helpless, the rebellious, the cast-offs of industrialism. Until society is seriously overhauled America will have its Boweries, like an ugly mirror reflecting hidden evils. But if the Hart Island attempt works out, it will be one successful effort to find an answer. Manifold other problems remain, because there is no single problem nor single answer to the tragedy of separate men.

The Pope's Christmas Message

FROM THE EARLIEST days of his pontificate, when he exerted every effort to prevent the outbreak of World Ward II, Pius XII has been a staunch advocate of peace. Consequently there is a note of hopefulness in the fact that his Christmas Message did not present a sharper contrast between his exultant summary of the glories of the Holy Year and his various references to what transpired in the political and workaday world during 1950.

In his comment on the duties of the Christian today, faced with the present state of the world, the Holy Father placed first emphasis on the achieving of peace and concord within the boundaries of each country. He charged all pilgrims to be active heralds of the spirit of the Holy Year; he urged all the faithful to demonstrate that "there exists an intimate union and perfect harmony" between their civic and religious duties.

Pope Pius cited both the "go-getter" and those who avidly follow careers in fortune-hunting as symptoms of the unhealthy spirit of the times. He urged that, spurred on by the anxieties of the day, men should reassert their human solidarity and draw together to seek the common good.

Where international relations are concerned the Pope again called for common action. Did he have France in mind when he spoke of nations that "create political and economic difficulties against the strengthening of the national forces of other countries, while they ignore or take no thought for the common peril?" Does he refer to the Atlantic Pact when he recommends "the close union of all peoples who are masters of their own destiny and who are united by sentiments of reciprocal trust and mutual assistance" as "the sole means for the defense of peace and the best guarantee of its re-establishment?"

Pope Pius is torn with anxiety over the great division in the world and the possibilities for wholesale destruction by atomic warfare. He calls for tearing down the barbed wire and the barriers between peoples, offers the mediation of the Church and asserts the common heritage of the East and the West. He implores the Savior Who commanded the winds and the sea to "grant to harassed humanity the calm of true peace."

Food

WHEN from time to time the world learns that mass starvation is imminent in large areas of China or India, much of the battle to save lives is already lost. Even if countries with big food surpluses immediately dispatch grain by the boatload, there would be many that could not be reached in time. Roads are so poor and transport so primitive that local distribution proves to be one of the worst aspects of the problem. The

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only effective way to prevent mass famines is to plan for eventualities months ahead.

All this indicates the importance of the newly-formed American Emergency Food Committee for India which was announced to the press by Mme. Vijaya Lakshimi Pandit, Indian Ambassador to the United States. The immediate object of this committee is to secure gratis 2,000,000 tons of surplus American grain, which, with paid shipments from Argentina, Australia, Canada and this country totaling twice that tonnage, should see India through 1951. The chief activity of the committee will be to mobilize public opinion in favor of extending this emergency aid.

That is one way of approaching the Asiatic famine problem. Representative Javits of New York has already introduced a resolution in Congress that embodies the committee's objectives. It is, however, an obviously emergency approach, one that would hardly be viable year after year, especially when defense efforts cut deeply into farm surpluses. If possible, the people of India should be enabled to provide for their own sustenance.

The world's food supply was one of the topics at the opening sessions of the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Cleveland the other day. Dr. Karl Sax, director of the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, declared that the world must increase its production of food by 50 percent within the next decade to support its population. The chief means of doing this, the speaker said, would be to introduce new farming techniques in backward areas and to open new lands to cultivation.

With three-fifths of the people of the world unable to obtain adequate food, clothing and shelter, one key to this age-old problem is to increase per capita productiveness in distress areas. India should assuredly be one of the first on a Point IV or any similar list.

For the time being, the relief of hunger in Asia should be organized on a charitable basis. But in the long run every nation has a psychological desire to make its own way in the world and it is toward that end that we must, before it is too late, make every effort to assist the Asiatics.

Paradox

A CLERGYMAN in Australia, on hearing that President Truman had appealed to religious believers of all faiths to make common cause against Communism, announced that he was reluctant to heed the President's call because, he said, it sounded to him as if we were commandeering God, advising Him what side to take, something he doubts we are in a position to do. We would doubt that too, of course, and we share, to some extent at least, the clergyman's misgivings.

The idea that God, and we ourselves as believers in God, can be "used" and deployed for political purposes, with all of us — Catholic, Protestant, Jew, Moslem, Hindu and what have you—seated together along one side of the field on the bench for believers, while our fire-and-brimstone patriots and publicists pace up and down before us stimulating our taste for atheist blood, is a temptation our leaders are prey to these days, and although Mr. Truman's words did not strike us this way, it is altogether understandable that the clergyman should be on the watch for this lurking debasement of religion.

It is the kind of oversimplification most of our popular political cartoonists are given to. With a few strokes of the pen, Communism can be reduced to a cliche in the symbolic form of a sly-eyed, pipe-smoking, walrus-mustached "Old Joe," a caricature that bears no more relation to what Marxism is all about than do the cliches we use in everyday conversation to mask our superficial knowledge of the philosophy of materialism. In the same way religion can be drained of its meaning and reduced to a political cliche that can only make the believer wince with pain.

The point has been made often enough that democracy suffers certain disabilities in any fight with totalitarianism: democracy airs its divided mind in public, it can make few rigidly secret diplomatic or military moves, it has nowhere near the tight, centralized control that the tyrannical state has. Religion, too, will really have to be placed on this list of apparent disabilities, because religion and prayer are not essentially utilitarian, they are not things to fire up armies with, even when, as is surely the case right now, the struggle is a fight for religious survival, a conflict of absolutes.

Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, is the injunction religion has for us. And the more you think that through, the more the disability of religion in any struggle becomes an "apparent" disability only, like the rest of democracy's seeming disabilities, because to take that injunction to heart is to save religion from becoming a political cliche, and to do that is to give us something to fight for and to save our civilization from the echoes of tinkling cymbals and sounding brass.

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Asia Without Roots

Secularism, imported from the West, has left a spiritual void.

By MAX FISCHER

LATELY the wheel of history has been turning too quickly for the human understanding to follow. The history we learned in school taught us to think of Europe as the center of the globe and the scene of all great decisions. True, we have been aware of the fact that there was a time when the Mediterranean was the center of the civilized world and that later the center moved to the Atlantic. But is the scene of decision now moving again, moving to the wide spaces of Asia and the shores of the Pacific? Is this era of general democratization throwing the great masses of Asia into the scales of historical decision?

When, in the past, we heard of conflicts in Asia, we thought of them as being colonial wars, little episodes, in which the well-trained armies of the West enforced their will, triumphing over the helpless resistance of natives who lacked modern weapons. Japan, formerly the best-armed country of Asia, was victorious in the early stages of World War II against the great masses of China, a country with five times her population. Here among us a large school of thought has stubbornly maintained, up to this day, that all the great decisions of history are made in Europe and that the vast spaces of Asia are only a secondary scene of decision.

But now the United States has suffered in Asia the greatest defeat in its history.

What really has happened? How was it possible for the men in the Kremlin to use the great nations of Asia, in spite of their long history and their different national characters, as instruments in unifying the world according to their world-revolutionary pattern?

This is what has happened in Asia in the last five decades: the nations of Asia have lost the spiritual and intellectual roots of their native religious civilizations; they have been undergoing the influence of Western secular civilization at a seven-league pace; suddenly deprived of the stabilizing influence of their traditions, they have now arrived at a rootless and chaotic state of mind. Thus they became an easy prey for Stalinist destruction and revolutionary upheaval.

The stupefied Occident at first applauded the destruction of the traditional forms of Asiatic life. But this revolutionary process brought an understanding of the Christian mysteries to only an extremely small minority of the Asiatics, while the broad masses became confused and bewildered, ill at ease in the nihilism of their chaotic world-outlook. They readily accepted the cruel schemes that appeared to offer an escape into "certainty"—away from the unbearable turmoil of the thousand and one opinions that find expression in a rootless liberal world.

*

THIS situation is most unpleasant to us, but we have first of all to face it in all its consequences and without any illusions, if we want to understand the world of today and the problem of our own security. This tragic development in Asia is, of course, closely related to the intellectual crisis in our Western civilization, but it is much more radical and therefore much more pregnant and dynamic.

The secularization of Europe was a slow process of half a millenium. The religious roots were gnawed at by destructive minds but not completely eaten away. Many transcendental truths survived and the tree of the Christian religion brought forth some fresh leaves, even in the centuries of rationalism and materialism. We Occidentals can even have well-founded hope that this destructive movement is already nearing its end, that new seeds of spirituality are germinating. Furthermore, whereas in Europe the secularization was an autonomous movement, in Asia it has been imported from the outside.

It was an importation of "enlightenment" and anti-traditionalism in its crudest forms, without the many invisible relations that have tied our own modern secular civilization to the heritage of fifteen centuries, during which Christianity was the leaven of all Western life.

When, in 1911, the monarchist regime of China, deeply rooted in the ethical philosophy of Confucius, suddenly collapsed, the Western world, although not innocent of this event, was not aware of the consequences implied. On the

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contrary, the Western press announced jubilantly that the path of progress was now open to the Chinese. This optimistic sentiment was, of course, somewhat stimulated by the hope, held by Western businessmen and statesmen, that the downfall of the conservative regime might open China to many business opportunities hitherto blocked by the distrusting emperors. And they hoped it might facilitate the consolidation of strategic Western outposts. Everyone expected the development of a Chinese liberalism, Western style, with which one could do easy business.

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THIS WAS, of course, a most shallow interpretation of an historical catastrophe. What had collapsed in those days was not only a corrupt bureaucracy and an old-fashioned system of administration. The traditions of three millenia were suddenly cut off and the population of China was not only freed from a system of domination that certainly had many shortcomings, but, at the same time, from all its historical standards. People were just dumbfounded and thrown either into desperation or into a desire for a hopeful utopia. The recent rapid Bolshevization of China is the fruit of four earlier decades in which the Chinese nation lost the natural relation to its own past and tried in vain to create a democratic civilization out of the diffuse opinions of Westerners.

In the search to find a scapegoat for the catastrophe which has now become evident to every thinking American, there is harsh criticism of the men who were responsible for our information about Asia and our Asiatic policies. I have been myself a critic of this policy and I think that the American public was misled in a scandalous way when it was told that the Communists of China were not real Communists but harmless "liberal" land reformers and that they certainly were not puppets of Stalin. But the real problem lies much deeper. The victory of Communism in China is not only the product of these few years, in which the Western powers accepted apathetically the acceleration of the revolutionary tempo and the influence of the Kremlin's expansionistic tendencies. In actual fact, the way to the Bolshevization of China had already been opened by the chaos produced by the revolution against the monarchy, by the intellectual sterility and moral corruption of the Chinese parvenu class that did business with the West, by the inner strife between greedy generals who did the utmost in impoverishing their own country and in bringing restlessness to its population.

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IS THERE no alternative for the nations of Asia but Communist revolution? Certainly not by rubber-stamping American and European patterns on an Asiatic milieu with different conditions of life, and an entirely different history. Totalitarian systems may be able to enforce outward schemes by their pressure methods. But a liberal system can only be developed by internal forces, and this has to be done on the basis of cultural continuity. Mistakes have been made and the situation is most critical, but it is not yet hopeless. In India and many other countries of Asia there is still an obstinate resistance against the atheistic world outlook of the Kremlin. Uniting the national cultural forces against Stalinism and building up a sincere anti-Bolshevik ideology will be a sounder American policy than trying to cover up the bitter facts which have been responsible for the loss of our influence in China and much of our Asiatic prestige.

In practically all the Asiatic countries, except Turkey, and to a certain degree Japan, Westernization came from outside and it caused a rapid change of living conditions after centuries of cultural stability. Consider the hate the Arab nations have for the infiltration of the Zionists. This is caused not only by the advent of a different racial element, but because of their different style of living and different tempo of production, the Jews stirred up the feudal Arab rhythm of life. The Westerners continued to think in an Occidental manner and they were often most ignorant and prejudiced in face of the genuine traditions of Asia.

If we are to look at the history of Western influence in Asia from this point of view, we cannot help but admire the far-sighted policy that the Jesuit missionaries developed in the seventeenth century, both in India and in China. They were fully aware that these two nations had created great civilizations of their own and that one should not uproot them but respect their customs and manners. Therefore they adapted the eternal truth of Christianity to Oriental ways of thinking and even to Oriental symbolic acts. This seemed the only way for thorough success in converting Oriental nations without destroying their vital integrity. Unfortunately, this sound way of thinking was allowed to work for too short a period, since even within Catholicism this alleged "unholy compromise" was fought by other missionary orders.

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WHEN THE industrial civilization of the West knocked at the doors of Asia, people thought that the forms of European life were necessarily linked to technical progress. Today we know that technical improvement can be developed in various types of civilizations and that the chaotic influence of European liberalism in Asia is so perplexing that the simple scheme of Communism, with its primitive questions and

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stereotyped answers, has a remarkable appeal to nations that have lost their own roots.

I happened to be in Peking in 1930 and was allowed to discuss many questions with the students of a professor I knew from Europe. Already in those days, two decades ago, I was impressed with the fact that it was hard for these young students to understand the Western world with its manifold answers to urgent problems and its lack of ready patterns. I reported these experiences, but nobody seemed alarmed at the time. I made similar observations in many other Asiatic lands, including the Balkan countries. In all the universities of the Near East, the Middle East and the Far East I met students from poor families who studied on a hunger diet or on small stipends, sometimes paid by Westerners. The hopelessness of professional advancement, the fear these "white collar proletarians" had that they would never have a chance of getting a position on a level with their capability, made them an easy prey for Muscovite propaganda. Marxist ideology often had a great attraction for them, because it freed them from the uneasiness of a problematic mind, it presented them with pleasant reasons for their failures and gave them the illusion of understanding "the laws of life" when they learned by heart ready-made answers to any and each problem. The students of those days are now the political leaders of Asia.

Western schools in Asiatic countries were not able to beat this skilfully planned propaganda. They had no "patterns." Their teachers held different opinions, from the most conservative to the most leftist, from fundamentalist to sceptical and atheist. But all these teachers were equally inclined to accept the civilization of their own countries as the standard civilization and thus they were instrumental in uprooting the young Asiatic intelligentsia from its traditions. We need urgently a new type of American school in Asia before it is definitely too late.

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IT IS a consequence of the materialism of the present Occidental world-outlook that writers on current affairs talk about the Asiatic "revolution" as if it were the result mostly of economic causes. No doubt there are shocking extremes of wealth and poverty that are offensive to Western eyes, but these have always existed in Asia without causing revolution. Of course, it is helpful and prudent if we advise the Asiatic people how such temporary failures can be relieved by means of modern administration. But all this fight against temporary failure does not get to the roots of the tragic Asiatic unrest. Poor economic conditions are certainly not the paramount causes of the present tension, which is a spiritual one. That the masses are now less patient in suffering from want and poverty is due not to a change of social standards but to the infiltration of resentful Communist propaganda.

It is true that in some local areas the bad economic conditions have deteriorated even more because of soil erosion, over-population or other evils. It is fine and useful if we lend the people of Asia the assistance of our greater experience and resources. But without a change of the whole mental outlook social resentment will continue even under relieved social circumstances.

As a matter of fact, there are also large parts of Asia where social standards have improved under the influence of modern techniques or thanks to the development of new industries, as in Manchuria and in Bengal. But this has not at all diminished the tension of the population. It has even increased it.

★

MAN DOES not live by bread alone. Unrest in Asia has not only material causes. It cannot be cured by merely material remedies. It is first of all the uprooted soul of the Asiatic that cries out in desperate emptiness and this soul will remain restless as long as it has to live in a spiritual vacuum, desperately yearning to find again its own form of life and an organic culture in which to dwell.

When, against the prejudices of our public opinion and the hysterical warnings of leftist newspaper men, Washington decided (due to the initiative of Ambassador Grew) to keep the Japanese Emperor as the supreme head of state there, the value of this symbolic traditional figure, who granted all political rights and to whom all loyalties were owed, was rightly understood. This wise policy has saved Japan from a total destruction of her tradition. But in countries where such traditions have already been cruelly destroyed, it is doubtful whether they can be regained by a posthumous restoration. It is, generally, too late to return to destroyed institutions. Past and present have to be combined and remolded in a creative way and this can be done only by the living forces of national genius.

If our policy is not to retreat from Asia in the face of the Communist menace (and we have to be unwilling to retreat in order to save our civilization), then we have to respect also the traditions and the tradition-based cultural aims of the Asiatic peoples and to assist them generously in working out new ways of life which blend modern methods of production with a sound continuity of national traits. Only by going deeper to the roots of their own traditions can the nations of Asia come to a successful renaissance that may enable them to resist the expanding floods of Bolshevism.

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FROM HONG KONG

The Church in China

UNTIL 1912 the Chinese Emperor was considered by his hundreds of millions of subjects as a descendant from heaven; the religious head of the nation, with the right to exercise supreme power.

The faith of the emperor was expressed in the complicated ceremonies which he performed in his worship as representative of the people, in the Temple and before the Palace shrines. The people themselves manifested their faith in their worship at the Family Shrine always set up in the heart of the home, and in their offerings made at the pagan temples which dotted the countryside.

The doctrines of the sages studied by the literati, and passed on to the peasants through proverbs and customs, formed the minds of the people in their worship of heaven and molded them in a definite faith.

The revolution of 1911 changed much of this. It was the starting point which set China on the road to scientific and Western materialism. The popular religion of the people was ridiculed as superstition; science was enthroned in its place.

Many temples were closed to worship and transformed into schools which adopted a Western system of education. This system was built along materialistic lines according to the worst European exponents of educational theory.

Practically all the textbooks, from primary schools to university, were filled with teaching which deprived young China of her faith in heaven, and which paid only lip-service to the ancient Chinese sages. Buddhist Monks and nuns in many places were thrown out of their temples.

Under a more violent form, the Red Masters of China today have pushed these principles to their extreme logical conclusion. With a masterful plan executed with vigor and thoroughness they strike at the root of every spiritual belief, and try to over-run whatever remains of the old way of life and the ancient customs.

Filial piety, the kernel of Chinese life, is ridiculed in the name of freedom.

Chinese women, whose influence and work has always been restricted to the family circle, are now taught to think themselves equal with men in everything. The factory woman with oily hands competes with men in the mad race to increase production of armaments. In this setting, she is represented as a glorious type of her sex.

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In Communist China, not only is any kind of faith in supernatural influence ridiculed, as in the 1912 revolution, now it is actively fought against.

Still the basis of our hope for China lies in the fact that the Chinese people are believers. As Father Danielou pointed out in his book *The Salvation of the Nations,* if Christianity is to progress among pagans it needs a foundation.

In the meantime, Communism in China is certainly fulfilling, in the hands of God, an extremely valuable purpose. It is purifying the Church, and pagan society as well.

The Church in China, as in all missionary countries, has been built on the foundation of Western Catholicism. And it has reproduced here some of the imperfections which have tarnished the splendor of Christianity in the West.

Missionaries in many places have not been one with their people. Natural barriers of nationality, language and customs have tended to set them apart. Often the foreign missionary, through incapacity rather than bad-will, has found himself isolated, living above the life-stream of his people. Communism has already changed this substantially.

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PAGAN society also needs to be purified. Communism is purifying pagan society in China now, and making it ready for the Gospel message.

The centuries-old Chinese civilization is smug and self-complacent. It lacks initiative and push. It needs to be shaken out of this attitude, to broaden its mentality and correct its many social injustices.

The cause of the downfall of the Kuomintang clique was lack of civic responsibility; of unbounded self-interest in placing personal family welfare before the general welfare of the people.

Communism brought into power an even more selfish oligarchy which forces the whole nation to become subservient to its interests and welfare. The present regime cannot fail to waken in the people a burning desire to coordinate activity and to improve national conditions. The Chinese people have begun already to discover the tremendous amount of hatred and selfishness behind the high sounding terminology of the Communist Party. Certainly not everything runs smoothly in Red China.

The universal suffering allied with general uneasiness is the daily fare of the people and it is directing their mentality towards new currents of thought. There is no doubt that the Chinese people will emerge from this crisis with a new set of standards. Their faith in the old social system and the old philosophy is now shaken, and the intellectuals as well as the peasants are looking for a new philosophy of life; a new social system which may satisfy the craving for peace, and may set the nation on the highway to prosperity.

The very fact that there is an intense drive against all forms of religion and spiritual belief focuses the attention of the people on the religious problem, and accentuates their interest.

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AMONG the students of China, the Communists score a huge success. From their ranks most of the propagandists are derived. The secret of this success is due mainly to the fact that the young people are given a high purpose in life, and their natural generosity is exploited by the demand for enormous sacrifices.

Young China is strenuously resolved to build a new China and the cost is not counted. Communism binds them together in oneness of purpose.

"Suddenly there comes this sense of 'belonging,' of being part of a movement in which you can very well take your place and hasten it forward; hasten forward the salvation of the human race, the solution of the feuds between man and nature, the establishment of universal brotherhood, giving each to each according to his capacity. There is a kind of grandeur about that! There is a kind of humanism that makes the simplest little follower feel he belongs to, is part of 'a movement.' Although he might be a fitter all day, standing with a spanner turning nuts, when he's finished doing that, he is the Proletariat, the hope of the future, working for militancy, for the dawn of this great age when there will no longer be the exploitation of man by man, but each will work and give his contribution for the glory of the state as a whole, in which all will share. . . ." (Father Fitzgerald.)

To illustrate the enormous sacrifices asked and given freely by the Chinese Communist youth I give you this outline of the schedule in a Propagandist's School in China. The order of the day and rigid discipline would shock a Trappist novice.

These schools have sprung up everywhere in China. The courses last from three to six months.

The young people, boys and girls, get up at four a.m. winter and summer alike. They wash in the open air, and then do some physical drill. They are then divided into small groups (of not more than eleven persons) in which they meditate on Communist doctrine and discuss pertinent questions. Silence is compulsory apart from the discussion.

At noon they break their fast with a frugal meal, taken hastily, standing or sitting on benches. The work, done in common, of cleaning the establishment, follows. The rest of the afternoon is spent in sports, community singing, folk-dancing and lectures. Supper, another frugal meal, is again taken hastily. At 9 p.m. the "great silence" begins, which must be kept until the following morning.

Nobody is allowed out during the day except for half a day on Sundays. They may not receive visitors except for half an hour.

Along with this harsh physical discipline there is a mental training almost as gruesome. Students have to accuse themselves of their faults in public and have to take humbly the accusations made by others. They must submit to their masters all their letters and diaries. They must examine their consciences and find whatever attachment there is to the old way of life and to what they call the bourgeois life and feudalistic society. If they misbehave, for instance, if they talk during the "great silence" period, or smoke, they are publicly punished and even expelled.

When the course is finished the young propagandists are sent out alone or in a team to organize study groups in factories or schools, among both peasants and intellectuals. They accept their assignment as a mission and devote themselves with an ardor and enthusiasm worthy of a better cause. These young people are poorly paid, constantly watched and spied upon, and yet they serve with a love and generosity worthy of a great cause.

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MAO TSE-TUNG, the Chinese Communist Leader started life as a peasant. Later he studied in Central China. It was the sight of the social injustices and the sufferings of the people that made him conceive the plan of devoting himself to the liberation of his people. This noble ideal was lost on the way up the ladder to power. What remains now is nothing but high-sounding words proclaiming justice and freedom, completely devoid of any practical application.

The old injustices are used to stir up the sympathy of the youth, but nowhere under the new regime have the sufferings of the people been lightened. The rich have been dispossessed and are in a state of despair. The poor have become destitute and hopeless. All work is directed to serve the Soviet. Russian advisers and experts are the real masters of the country.

While China needs every ounce of energy and every natural resource to rebuild her life as a nation shattered by 13 years of continual war, her leaders care only for war production, and the comfortable welfare of the ruling clique. The Red leaders alone have beautiful houses, and luxurious cars. The masses have nothing.

Pope Pius XI said of the Catholic countries that the greatest scandal of our century is the loss to the Church of the working masses. This is also true in part for the missions, and especially for China.

I must confess I do not know how we could have done our work differently. It is true none the less that we have failed somewhere along the line. We have not presented a dynamic Catholicism to the working masses of China. We have not made them understand that Christianity can solve their tremendous social problems. Perhaps because Catholics in the West failed to live out the Church's social teachings, we made the same mistake in the East. Now we have the opportunity to repair the damage.

Instead of watering down our Catholicism, making minimum demands, we should ask for generous sacrifices which will bear witness to the height of Christian heroism.

China has been consecrated to Our Lady Mediatrix of All Graces. We have no doubt in the final triumph of our cause. We do know too that fourteen thousand Mission personnel have remained at their posts defying persecution; three and a half million Catholics are living in fear under a regime of intimidation; and all the 450 million Chinese need our spiritual assistance.

NICHOLAS MAESTRINI.

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O Come, All Ye Faithful

"THE great scandal of the 19th century was that the Church lost the working class."

These words of Pius XI are quoted and requoted, but here in America we don't really believe them. Europe, yes, but not here in the good old USA. Look at the Holy Name parades, look at the workingmen filling the Polo Grounds, look at the churches on Sunday.

Men and workers are not synonymous, but nearly. Certainly a Church which cannot hold the men cannot hold the workers. And today one of the most frightening things about the Church is the absence of an appeal to men. The art is feminine; the hymns are not only feminine but girlish; the Communion rail is so crowded with women that a man feels de-sexed if he is seen there; in the average Mass as it is said in our churches there is no intellectual content to hold the male mind. Why do the workers still go to Mass? There is nothing there but God. They still see Him, but through a glass darkly. If you sit behind them on Sunday you can see their attention wandering. If there is a pretty girl they will sooner look at her than at the altar. If there is a window open their eyes will wander off and away to the distracting world.

It does not seem possible to hold them much longer unless a change comes. For America it will only have to be rewritten slightly: "The great scandal of the 20th century was that the Church lost the working class." And then, like the French we will have to send our priests to work in the factories so that they can see what a workingman looks like and how he talks and how he feels, so that once again they can show the trade-mark that Christ put upon His mission: "the poor have the Gospel preached to them."

It is wonderful at Christmastime to see how the people rush to express their love in wreaths and lights and cards and presents. It is not all commercial hokum. Even when they are not making a conscious act of faith they are pouring out something of themselves in homage to the idea of Christ, to the beauty and goodness and charity of that idea.

Love must find expression or it will die. In our churches today there is little or no expression. The people crouch dumbly in the pews and the priest mumbles to himself and to God in a strange tongue. Mumbling and rush have become so much a habit that sometimes, in the English prayers after Mass, when there is at last a chance for everyone to unite in a common prayer, the whole thing is blitzed in such a fashion that if a stranger were to overhear it he could still understand neither priest nor people.

Now and then you find a place where things are done differently. Last summer I went to St. Louis for a union meeting. I had read about Holy Cross parish and Monsignor Hellriegel and asked one of the St. Louis delegates who happened to be a Catholic how I could get there. Of course he had never heard of it.

That Sunday morning another delegate and I did get there, by taxi. The church is in a middle class suburb no different from a thousand others across the land. The architecture is a prosaic imitation Gothic and the art work inside is not extraordinary except for two fine altar-pieces at the sides. But when the Mass begins you are in a strange and wonderful land.

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WE WENT to the nine o'clock Mass, the children's Mass. The children came marching in, each carrying a big brown manila envelope. As my friend said, "like so many union delegates." In the most solemn way imaginable they take out their music and put the envelopes carefully against the back of the pews. Then comes the procession, led by a picked choir of approximately eight boys and eight girls who range themselves between the congregation and the sanctuary.

They sing Gregorian. The congregation, led by the children and Monsignor Hellriegel, who is a mighty leader, sing the simpler parts out of kyriales which can be borrowed at the door.

The small choir alternates with the congregation and also sings the antiphons and less common parts. I have never heard more beautiful singing in my life than the singing done by that small choir. Possibly the angels in heaven do it better, but you cannot prove it by me.

At the Epistle a small altar-boy reads the English into a microphone in a clear, firm voice. The sermon was on "the Good Shepherd," a most appropriate subject, and like most things at Holy Cross, it had been planned and it was done with love and style.

It is too much to expect that all Catholic churches should be Holy Crosses. The thing takes special talents and there are not many Monsignor Hellriegels. Even the best of men can be born tone-deaf.

But the basic thing is the congregational participation. When benighted souls like myself, a convert from the Episcopal Church, come into the Catholic Church they do not come because they are tired of praying together in a language which they understand. They do not come because they are tired of a religion in which it is possible to follow the service easily without a prayer book and to understand everything because it is spoken clearly.

They come for many reasons, but when they come it is not because of the way Mass is said in the average Catholic church. It is in spite of it. Protestantism is supposed to glorify the individual beyond all reason, and it is true, but it is ironic that in Protestant churches, people pray together, and it is in the Catholic Church at the usual low Mass, that the people sink back into themselves, each alone, each praying or not praying in his own way, each following or not following the sacrifice in his own way. Truly this is a case of being infected by the very thing that we abhor, the thesis that man does

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not need a mediator, does not need priests, does not need a liturgy, does not need the support of his fellowman, but can reach God perfectly well within his own heart and mind, alone and unaided.

At St. Margaret Mary's on Staten Island Father Monaghan puts on a good demonstration of what can be done without choirs and Gregorian, just at a simple low Mass. Everyone is given a leaflet Missal when he enters the church. A priest says the Mass in Latin at the altar. Another priest says it in English and the people respond in those parts which rightly belong to them, the responses, Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, etc. And everyone hears the Epistles, those magnificent, unknown, untold messages of our Church.

This is the well-known Dialogue Mass, unfortunately still not well-known enough. It is not easy to do it without two priests. At its best you feel that you are not participating in the main drama, the one that is going on in Latin at the altar, but in another drama, almost as good, very similar, but a different one in English, almost as good but not quite.

"What then is to be done?" asked St. Paul in one of the Church's first discussions of the liturgical problem. And he answered: "I will pray with the spirit, but I will sing with the understanding also. Else if thou givest praise with the spirit alone, how shall he who fills the place of the uninstructed say 'Amen' to thy thanksgiving? For he does not know what thou sayest. For thou, indeed, givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank God that I speak with all your tongues; yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may also instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue" (1 Cor. 14:15-19).

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IT WAS not St. Paul who said, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." But the ignorant layman like myself sees that the Church sanctions the Mass in the vernacular as long as you are lucky enough to come from one of the lands that fell into the Orthodox schism. We live in a land that has fallen into schism and worse. From the simple, "foolish" point of view, if you can permit the Mass in Greek or Slavic in order to win or hold the Greeks and Slavs, why can't you permit the Mass in English in order to win, or hold, the English and Americans? Certainly there does not seem to be any violation of principle involved.

I know nothing about this difficult and delicate problem. I cannot even pretend that I am a spokesman for the working class. Nobody elected me to appeal to the Holy Father for Mass in the vernacular.

But when the workers leave the Church they do not elect spokesmen. They steal away quietly, one by one, each for his own reasons, no light, no warmth, no food, no love that could hold them. There was only a man at the far end of the church, his back toward them, mumbling in a strange tongue.

Nobody has elected me, but I appeal to the Holy Father just the same. JOHN C. CORT.

Communications

Paradise Enslaved

North Hollywood, California

TO THE EDITORS: Mr. Rorty ("Paradise Enslaved," December 1, 1950) must have been the victim of a dull and infuriating double feature (a common occurrence) to have vented such wrath on Hollywood. He had some points in his favor, as did Miss Powdermaker, but the conclusions were on the order of Pegler or Paul Blanshard. The wild idea that starlets and Mr. Big share sundry illicit affairs and indulge in bedroom gymnastics went out with prohibition. Hollywood is only as guilty as New York or Chicago. But the magnifying glass of publicity does make things look a lot worse. . . .

There has been a general tendency to condemn Hollywood in a wholesale manner for making pictures on any flimsy plot that comes along. There has been, it would appear, a conspiracy in the film capital to avoid any true conception of life in these United States. A goodly portion of the complaints on this score is from Catholics.

Aside from a few isolated notes here and there (one in THE COMMONWEAL for Oct. 20, 1950), nowhere is the thesis advanced that Hollywood may well have been doing a bang-up job of holding a mirror before our general culture. Hardly any place is the theory postulated that we have seen Gloria Glamour in insipid pictures, singing insipid songs and voicing insipid thoughts because we did not care about the plot, the lyrics, or the dialogue we saw and heard. We did not look for "whole" people, people with an instinct for both vice and virtue. Rather did we look for the familiar formulae: three definite and indisputable characters—the true-blue hero, the lily-white heroine, and the jet-black villain. And all because we thought of people in these technicolor terms. . . .

Think now of the newspapers of today and the antics and attitudes they reflect: one page of serious editorials; a few pages of pertinent, if colored, news; and page after page of sentimental fawning over divorces, forlorn cats, and crime. And through it all, picture after picture of Gloria Glamour in her brief costume breaking through a cardboard heart on Valentine Day, lighting a prop firecracker for the Fourth of July, gracing the prow of the Santa Maria to commemorate Columbus Day, and peeking over a pumpkin to herald the advent of Thanksgiving. This, unfortunately, may be what we *were* giving thanks for.

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BUT there is a ray of hope in Hollywood. For we have made a few adult pictures on adult themes. The solution offered in these pictures of genuine conflict is not always the wisest but the attempt has been made. The door is open.

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There is new blood in the industry, younger blood. Louis B. Mayer, for instance, has placed the younger Dore Schary in charge of the vast Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios and retains only an advisory interest in the current product. At RKO Jerry Wald and Norman Krasna, both young men, have a virtual free rein. From studio to studio we note the important changes. Autonomous and semi-autonomous production units are emerging, men are making films on "taboo" subjects, and a variety of points of view are reaching the screen. The process is, of necessity, slow. But it is sure. These new men with new ideas are groping for the questions and the answers. They were not bred in the gold bathtub era of motion pictures. They were young and aware while the country went through the extensive social maturing of the thirties and the New Deal. And a little of the age rubbed off on them.

Valentine Davies, ex-president of the Screen Writers Guild and author of two recent outstanding screenplays ("Miracle on 34th Street" and "It Happens Every Spring"), spoke to a group of screen story analysts at a seminar and sounded a hopeful note. More and more, according to Mr. Davies, screen writing is becoming a respectable profession and the writer is gaining in dignity long denied him. More and more the studios are dispensing with the old notion regarding writers, the totem-pole notion that eight heads are better than one. They are coming around to the valid notion that one good writer will suffice. Consequently, continued Mr. Davies, a flow and unity emerges at page 120 of the script that began on page one. He concluded that this leads to the portrayal of characters with adult reactions to all problems, building to a logical and satisfactory conclusion.

This "new look" in scenarists brings them a new responsibility. It will inevitably reflect in their scenarios.

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NOW, when there is this evidence of an awakening to the responsibility of the film medium mentioned by Pope Pius XI, we have hit a snag. Pope Pius hoped films would contribute "to the genesis of a just social order in the world." But our most widely syndicated Catholic motion picture critic says, "The more films there are about conflicts between American Negroes and whites, Christians and Jews, etc., the better the Commies will like it." No mention here of stating your problem and offering a real solution. The Commies want housing?—we will drop that hot potato; the Commies yell for FEPC legislation?—lay off; the Commies ask for more pictures on the Negro-white issue?—as the radio comic says, "Perish forbid."

How do we resolve these difficulties? Do we listen to the Pope or the critic? De we make pictures with depth, or shun this request of the Pope because it is too controversial and therefore not fit for pure American minds. I think the answer is obvious and the motion picture producers have chosen well. . . .

ARTHUR PIANTADOSI, JR.

The Screen

WOULD YOU HIT A WOMAN WITH A CHILD?

ON looking over the list of films of 1950 (the year during which Hollywood complained bitterly about business and adopted for its slogan: "Movies are better than ever") I have had great difficulty selecting my ten best. There were ten of course that were better than the bad ones; but there were few movies during 1950 that are better than ever. And Hollywood doesn't have to hang its head alone; very few of the imports made us cheer. Good foreign-language films were scarce; and while England sent us some outstanding items, even these were limited in number.

But at the year's end, a critic owes it to his readers to rise to the occasion so they know where he stands. Therefore, disregarding the arbitrary "ten," I plunge in and nominate the following as the cinema highlights of 1950.

FROM ENGLAND

The Third Man—for Carol Reed's superb direction of Graham Greene's thriller and for its brilliant and original use of music which made the zither the instrument of the year.

Tight Little Island—for its utterly charming visualization of Compton MacKenzie's story about a group of thirsty Scotsmen.

Kind Hearts and Coronets—for Alec Guinness' eight performances in this handsomely-made, brittle *tour de force.*

The Rocking Horse Winner—for John Mills' fine production and Antony Pellisier's cinematically-moving direction of his own script based on D. H. Lawrence's story.

Seven Days to Noon—for the Boulting Brothers' good production and direction of a thriller about a deranged scientist on the loose with an A-Bomb, and for their skill in making the City of London the star of a movie. (This picture which opened at the year's end in New York will be reviewed in THE COMMONWEAL next week.)

FROM HOLLYWOOD

Sunset Boulevard — for Producer Charles Brackett's and Director Billy Wilder's excellent use of cinema to tell a melodramatic and satirical story about the people who make and appear in films, and for the outstanding cast headed by Gloria Swanson, William Holden, Erich von Stroheim and Nancy Olson.

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All About Eve—for Joseph L. Mankiewicz' direction and writing of his script about theater folk and for its outstanding cast headed by Bette Davis, who gave what I consider the finest performance of the year.

Twelve O'Clock High—for being the best of a new group of war films that show what the fighting in World War II was really like.

The Men—For Stanley Kramer's production and Fred Zinnemann's direction of a realistic story about paraplegics, which, in spite of Marlon Brando's overly tough portrayal, showed great understanding of the problems of the afflicted.

The Hasty Heart—for Richard Todd's fine performance in a film version of John Patrick's play which succeeded in surmounting sentimentality in a story about a bitter, lonely, dying Scotsman.

Broken Arrow—for being the best in the current cycle of films daring to speak up in favor of the much-maligned American Indian and for treating Indians as human beings rather than dust-biting Redskins.

The Asphalt Jungle—for John Huston's first-rate direction in spite of the story's clichés about unsavory characters.

Father of the Bride—for overcoming a typical glossy Hollywood production and being the funniest picture of the year, for its heart-warming satire, and for Spencer Tracy's good performance in the title role.

Cinderella—for Walt Disney's continuing in his own best tradition his inspired personification of animals.

Edge of Doom—for Samuel Goldwyn's courage in bringing Leo Brady's novel to the screen, for his handsome production and Mark Robson's good direction.

King Solomon's Mines—for its extraordinarily beautiful photography of an African trek.

Cyrano de Bergerac—for Jose Ferrer's superb performance in this first American filming of Rostand's famous play.

Stage Fright—for Producer-director Alfred Hitchcock's swinging back into his own fine style of murder mysteries with humorous touches.

Mystery Street and *Union Station*—for leading the field in minor thrillers that successfully use locale to heighten tense situations.

Mister 880—for Edmund Goulding's direction and Edmund Gwenn's great performance as a lovable and kindly counterfeiter who made only dollar bills.

THIS list could go on and on with words of praise for various high spots of the year, like Leo G. Carroll's acting and Elia Kazan's direction, but it must come to an end—not, however without giving a special award to an international documentary called *The Titan.* This picture, first made by Curt Oertel in Italy and then edited by many experts and given a narration in English, uses no actors to tell the story of Michelangelo. Through superb photography of the artist's works as well as of the towns and buildings in which he lived, Michelangelo and his turbulent times come to life. This original and beautiful movie is in a class by itself and deserves long applause.

Would that I could say as much for Hollywood as a whole. Obviously many individuals in the world's film capital merit a hand for various items I have listed above and no doubt for others I have missed. But one keeps wondering why on earth the industry (which said so truthfully, "Nothing is wrong with the picture business that good pictures can't cure") doesn't make more good pictures. Hollywood is no longer a newcomer, a child; it has made many movies that show signs of maturity. Let's hope in 1951 it makes many more adult pictures. For the present I can only answer the question proposed in the title to this column: "No, I'd hit her with a brick."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Stage

BLESS YOU ALL

THE company of this new Harold Rome-Arnold Auerbach revue play it with an oddly uncertain air, as though they were perfectly willing to *do* the numbers but weren't quite sure what points they were supposed to be making. Shortly after the curtain rises, Jules Munshin joins the showgirls for a song called "Do You Know a Better Way to Make a Living?" which, on the one hand, isn't precisely old-fashioned corn and, on the other, seems to lack a satirical quality in lyrics or staging to distinguish it from old-fashioned corn. I'd have settled for the corn and been happy enough, but those responsible for writing and directing the number had apparently never forced themselves to a clean-cut decision. A little later, Mr. Munshin appears in a sketch about an opera singer which seems vaguely concerned with the popularity of Ezio Pinza, but so vaguely as to set you groping for your program in search of a clue. There you find Munshin billed as one Enrico Bonzo and you decide, yes, they *do* mean Pinza, and you spend the rest of the sketch industriously trying to supply your own satirical reference, without success. Immediately thereafter Mary McCarty is given a honey of a song idea—in which a wife pauses in the process of bricking up her husband's body in the cellar to sing a touching lament called "Little Things Meant So Much to Me," the little things being

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the manner in which he ate his soup, and so forth. It would take real genius to louse this one up, but director and performer have very nearly done so. When the curtain parts, it is not made quite clear in the staging just what Miss McCarty is up to, and Miss McCarty herself is given no explicit attack on the song. Whereupon she delivers each of three choruses in a different comic style, as though trying them on for size, and the number, which might have been a really memorable one, fails to leave the single and choice impression it should have. So it goes throughout the evening, with the exception of Helen Tamiris' second-act ballet, "Desert Flame," which is brilliant. The interesting thing about this Tamiris conceit is that its points are never obvious, never easy, and yet they are always made. It serves as a curious contrast to the rest of the show, which has been unable to locate the most blatant emphases, and which, at eleven o'clock, is to be found poking around with the by now very tired Roaring Twenties material without finding a sufficiently exact attitude to take toward *that,* either.

Jules Munshin is an affable performer who does not yet seem to have found for himself any distinctive comic style. He is at his best in a sketch on miracle drugs, but even here he never makes you feel that only *he* could play it this way. Mary McCarty, too, seems to be without special quality, doing everything adequately and nothing strikingly. Pearl Bailey is on hand for two numbers before the curtain, and fine in both of them. I must, however, count myself among those who wish she *wouldn't* ad lib so much. Valerie Bettis is the show's most forceful and exciting performer, in every way the perfect instrument for what Choreographer Helen Tamiris has in mind. (*At the Hellinger.*)

LET'S MAKE AN OPERA

ON MY WAY to the theatre, I found myself admiring the courage and seriously questioning the optimism of Peter Lawrence and Sylvia Siegler in presenting a show in which the audience was to be required to sing, community-style. If there is one thing in the world calculated to freeze the blood of an American audience, they had discovered it and even boldly advertised it in advance. I was therefore much surprised, not to say astonished, to discover that the community singing was by far the most ingratiating part of the evening. Though Norman Del Mar, who conducted it, seemed far too coy at the outset, he did actually succeed in making the audience sing, and the four songs which Benjamin Britten composed for the purpose are completely charming.

What reduced the evening to a shambles, and closed the show after a few performances, was the ineptitude of Eric Crozier's spoken dialogue and the incredible clumsiness of Marc Blitzstein's over-all staging. The core and climax of the entertainment is a short children's opera, "The Chimney Sweep," which by itself might be very attractive and which may yet find considerable use as a curtain-raiser, but which has been expanded to make a full evening by the addition of several scenes in which the opera is rehearsed, and by the aforementioned audience participation. The rehearsal scenes are written and played in a style which would dismay fond parents at the most amateurish high school gala, and the little opera itself is subjected to a heavy-handed and irrelevant stylization calculated to conceal whatever merits it may possess.

"Let's Make an Opera" has been cited as another example, in a season full of them, of the failure of British successes to make a go of it here. The Benjamin Britten-Eric Crozier piece, however, does not really belong on this list. Quite apart from the stilted and self-conscious production which has hurt it here, it never did have a regular commercial success in London, but was confined to a tryout theatre, where it attracted a specialized audience, and to subsequent school performances. It is to the latter that the piece belongs, with a vengeance. (*Presented at the Golden.*)

WALTER KERR.

Of Note

Eric Gill

FATHER DESMOND CHUTE, an English secular priest who is a member of the Dominican Third Order, is writing a series of articles for *Blackfriars* (St. Giles, Oxford, England) on Eric Gill, with whom he worked as an engraver and carver in stone. He makes clear some of the things Gill stood for:

> It is misleading for some critics to say that Gill "renounced the whole basis of our cilivization . . . because his philosophy saw no function for the artist in the machine age." He merely noted this fact as symptomatic of both the age and its artists. For art in the nineteenth-twentieth century sense of the word, he has precious little use. "As to the so-called fine arts—the lap-dog arts—their eclipse would be all to the good." Not that he was indifferent to contemporary development—witness his respect for Maillol, Dobson, Moore; his interest in the Spencers' painting, Cocteau's drawing, Bartok's quartets; his life-long friendship and admiration for David Jones; only he recognized the 'fine-artist's' position as being perforce parasitic. . . . If he did reject our civilization, it was because it had no place for the free man. "I hoped I had made it clear that my complaint against machine industry was that it destroyed (not the personal quality in modern art but) the personal quality in the modern workman."

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The Rutgers Affair

By JOHN COGLEY

IT is doubtful if "Cumberland Street," a short story which appeared in the Rutgers University *Antho* last fall, will find a place in the new anthologies. But even at a time when impassioned journalism is thriving, "Cumberland Street" could hold its own in a Pen Is Mightier contest. It is a grimly naturalistic slice of life written by Curtis Meanor, a Rutgers junior generously described by his editors as "an above average writer, whose abilities are of a very high quality." By publishing "Cumberland Street," a story of abortion, *Antho* managed to arouse the formidable collective disapproval of the Catholic War Veterans of New Brunswick, New Jersey, the New Brunswick Fourth Degree, Knights of Columbus, and the Union of Holy Name societies of the diocese of Trenton.

Town and gown were both shaken by the story. Its publication and the loud cry of disapproval heard later were directly responsible for the formation of a Rutgers eight-man committee, including two deans and the presidents of the undergraduate classes, to "investigate the need" for the campus magazine.

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THE inflammatory story originally appeared in the October, 1950 issue of *Antho*. That entire issue was introduced with a sassy little preface, later reproduced in a paid ad by the Catholic War Veterans.

> We are proud of our ability quietly to inject ourselves into the public eye by means of such flamboyant schemes as nepotism, lasciviousness, narrow mindedness and downright meanness. This issue we have achieved a new apex in all four of these fields, in the name of good literature of course.
>
> Our independent, if somewhat disoriented attitude, will surely cause a raised eyebrow someplace, and we apologize for the physical discomfiture caused by the exertion of raising an eyebrow, although we have a feeling that most of the raised eyebrows will belong to people whose eyebrows are well exercised. We don't apologize for our attitude, or for the contents of the magazine, which represents the best writing of Rutgers men. . . .

These paragraphs seem to indicate that *Antho* is more typical than titillating. George Bernard Shaw lamented that youth was wasted on the young, and there is no more graphic illustration of the infirmities of young-age than the college quarterly that fancies itself iconoclastic, rebellious, devastatingly honest and daring. What is passed off as iconoclasm is generally mere irreverence on the part of those who have yet to savor mystery; its daring is the brave irresponsibility of the small boy chalking the sidewalks.

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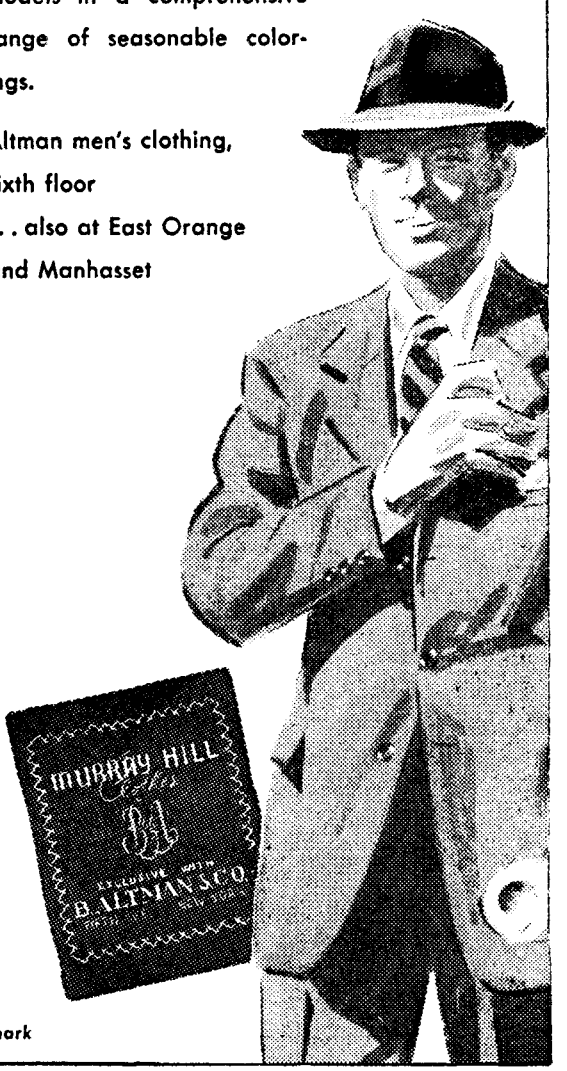

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This may not describe *Antho*. But after that callow introduction, one wouldn't open its pages expecting sophistication. And one suspects that by making such an almighty pother about the offending story, the Catholic groups have unwittingly prolonged even further the underdevelopment betrayed by *Antho's* introduction.

"Cumberland Street" itself was undoubtedly an unusual story for *Antho,* or any college quarterly, to publish. For one thing, it defies most of the canons of what is roughly described as good taste. The subject matter, criminal abortion, is at best a disquieting theme. The author of "Cumberland Street" is sometimes coldly functional in his choice of language and throughout more concerned with the clinical than the dramatic. It is not the kind of story, in short, that one expects in a college magazine, not because students don't write that kind but because scholastic journalism, with an eye on the more squeamish alumni, is almost always carefully monitored. In the case of "Cumberland Street," the faculty advisor had ordered certain deletions which were not made, because, the editors explained lamely, in the last-minute rush they were over-looked.

★

AS IT stands, the story shows that its young author has dutifully learned the great Hemingway lesson. He is generally sparse, colloquial, laconic in his story telling. However the author of the story, in his passionate indignation against the evil of abortion, didn't always succeed in keeping his voice down. Every now and then pulpit ferocity got the better of him.

If he had resisted that temptation, his artistry might have gained, but in the light of the subsequent developments it is just as well that he didn't. Young Meanor fortunately made it painfully clear in his story that he was opposed to abortion.

Even his severest public critics, who seem to have missed by a mile his meaning in the boozy sections of the narrative, have not accused Meanor of favoring abortion, though he was publicly accused of "attacking motherhood," whereas it would seem that all his efforts were in the opposite direction.

"Cumberland Street" is essentially the case history of a single abortion performed by a professional. A certain Karl accompanies his friend Peter, a selfish, wilful young man, and Ellen, an unhappy young woman, to the home of Mrs. Hinkle, abortionist. Ellen conceived Peter's child, and the three are involved in getting Mrs. Hinkle to destroy it. Mrs. Hinkle does her mischief while the two men, hearing her crude directions, wait in another room; the three leave her evil house; and that is all there is to the story.

★

MERELY by describing what Mrs. Hinkle said and did, the author succeeds in making his story into a sordid, repulsive account of a sordid, repulsive practice. There can be no doubt that he depicts sin as sin, which seems to be a highly moral thing for a writer to do. And there is no hint of allurement or "go, do likewise" in his presentation of the ugly doings on Cumberland Street. Some of his Catholic critics have accused him of writing an obscene, lascivious story but, despite that unfortunate editorial introduction in *Antho,* the charge is groundless.

But lasciviousness was not the most serious charge made against "Cumberland Street," though it was the basis for the Knights of Columbus' complaint to the post office. The original K of C condemnation described the story as an attack on the Catholic Church, which was never specifically mentioned in the story. Later, when the Catholic War Veterans joined the Knights, they went further and, in their ad in the Newark *Star-Ledger,* called it an attack on every church and on religion itself. Their ad, headed "We Too, Love God," accused the young author of blasphemy and scurrility. They protested, they said, "in the name of every man who believes in God and loves Him with all his heart and soul."

The charge of blasphemy and of attack on religion was based on a misreading of a passage which the Veterans lifted from context and republished in the *Star-Ledger.*

> We will put the Peters in the pulpit, and the Mrs. Hinkles in the nunneries. You, Peter, can replace Christ, and Mrs. Hinkle the Virgin. Sex will be our god; and abortion the Holy Ghost. Science will devote itself exclusively to the problem of expansion of the seventy-six methods. The White House will become a nudist colony, and we'll communize our women. No more Ellens will call me on the phone and sobbingly appeal for aid. We'll invent a machine to mass produce Mrs. Hinkles and put one in every five-and-ten.

In the context of "Cumberland Street," this passage, bold as it is, does not qualify as blasphemy. One may object to the careless use of the holy names, but in "Cumberland Street" they are used by one for whom they have little meaning and what he is saying is not that the fornicating Peters should be in the pulpits and the abortionist Mrs. Hinkles in the nunneries, that the friend Peter, who connives with abortion, should replace Christ and Mrs. Hinkle the Virgin. He is saying that people who have no moral qualms about abortion would not flinch at such substitutions.

★

UNDOUBTEDLY there is a place in society for the censor and it may even be that mass pressure such as has been applied in the Rutgers case has succeeded now and then in making the world a safer, more wholesome, less dangerous place to live. But the man or group who takes on the obligations of the censor, more especially who assumes the burden of defending God, the Church and religion in general, should be eminently thoughtful, responsible and sure. This is not the kind of cause that is served by bluster, mere vehemence, prejudice or hasty judgment.

I do not think that in this case the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic War Veterans or the Holy Name society union had the virtues of the office they assumed. They may have had a case against "Cumberland Street" and Rutgers University, but it was not the case they pleaded.

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Books

Prize Stories of 1950. *Edited by Herschel Brickell. Doubleday.* $3.50.

IN THE preface to this collection, one of the judges, Hamilton Basso, says that most of the stories share a common theme: "namely, the trap that it is to be alive."

Most of the characters in these stories are, it is true, trapped by environment, economics, circumstance, personality. Life in the world reflected by this book is, to change the metaphor, decidedly a bad joke. And the over-all value one derives from these lesser Faulkners, Wolfes, Dreisers, Mansfields, is either a shock of recognition or "there but for the grace of God go I."

One is tempted to speculate on what a Catholic anthologist might say about the stories in this collection. The search for humanistic value in these dreary yarns would not be richly rewarding.

Wallace Stegner's top prize story "The Blue-Winged Teal" scores for human dignity with its deft and moving revelation of more lovable stuff in a father previously scorned by his embittered son.

J. D. Salinger, who did not win a prize, plays without sentimentality on the reader's heart-strings in a *New Yorker* yarn about two British children who are unselfish and generous enough to lift a GI out of manic depression.

It is understandable that the young writers in the collection should write about decadence in the south and the north, about sex, frustration, war. Life in a cold, gray light is stimulating material which enables them to maintain a footing with older, wiser writers. But when older, wiser writers continue to see life as a bitter, wearisome drill, better gotten over with quickly, one is tempted to take up the latest western story magazine.

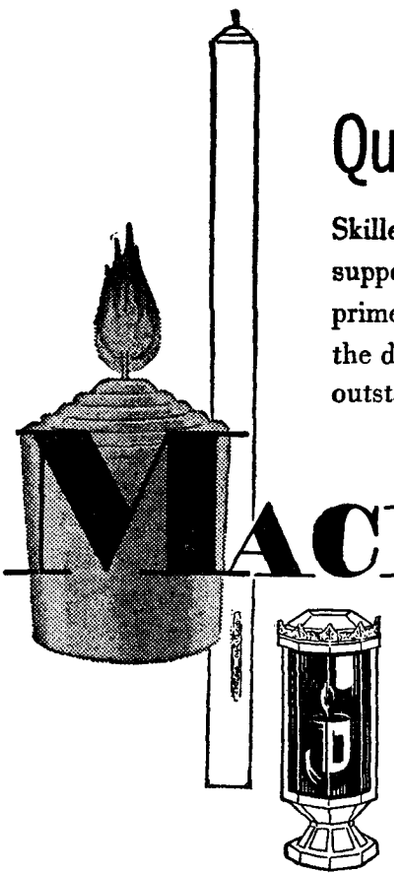
Too many of these stories rather sum up the human race in the GI marching song which we used to sing to the tune of "Our Director:"

"We're a bunch of bastards,
Bastards are we . . ."

After reading the skilful and moving story "Seasmiles" by Anne Goodwin Winslow, one feels like rushing down to the public library for a copy of *White Banners.*

Why Catholic anthologists have to scour the underbrush for stories written from a Christian perspective begins to be clear—there just aren't enough quality stories of that type being written. And such quality stories too often have their moral showing — however sophisticated the anthologist's preface, however cleverly camouflaged the author's technique.

The scarcity of such current stories forces the Catholic anthologist to reprint rather stale old pieces from former anthologies, so that the Catholic compiler becomes, absurdly enough, an editorial censor of extant



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secular collections.

These abridged anthologies may not impress Messrs. Brickell, Basso, Stegner and Salinger, but they sell awfully well in Catholic high schools and colleges.

There's no danger of Mr. Brickell getting into this highly lucrative act as long as he does not choose to become involved in the problem of art and morality. It might be postscripted that in Catholic literary circles there is more talk than truth about this problem. In our American Catholic culture, art invariably gets on the stage only when morality decides it is wearing enough clothes.

★

THERE'S an interesting priest story in the collection written by a Leonard Wallace Robinson. Mr. Robinson portrays powerfully the crack-up of a repressed young priest in the rectory of a city parish. It's all very vivid until you start looking for the point of the story. So a young, repressed priest cracks up. Then what do we do? Abolish celibacy? What do we do with young, unrepressed priests?

One asks these questions after reading the story simply because the story presents a challenge to the Christian even as it might add up to an "I told you so" for the anti-Catholic.

In effect, Mr. Robinson's story implies a moral almost as clearly as if he were to portray Father James collapsing into the arms of St. Brigid. The moral could be that celibacy just ain't healthy.

Thus a moral, even in a skilful, realistic story, is sometimes inevitable. Perhaps Catholic literary thinkers are not as percipient as they may think in warning young writers away from stories which moralize. Young writers can be struck dumb and wind up having nothing to say if they worry too much about not writing a moralizing story. When a story makes a point skilfully and with the indirect fictional method, it has moralized, however cleverly implied the moral may be.

It all depends on the talent and craft of the writer anyway. Some writers just moralize better than others *immoralize*. One would take J. F. Powers over Erskine Caldwell, for example, and Graham Greene over James M. Cain in the murder story genre.

Speed Lamkin's "Comes A Day" is one of the best things in the collection. Not unlike the papa in Mr. Stegner's story, Lamkin's innocuous pater comes to life at the story's finish to save his dazzling daughter from a terrifying marriage of convenience. The story has enough of the excitement, lyricism, poignancy of F. Scott's poor-little-rich-girl world to make you less conscious of Lamkin's struggle for supremacy with Capote and Vidal.

Nelson Algren disappoints with a straight reportorial job on a Chicago police line-up. Kay Boyle is one of those people who's always around with the same line of chatter.

If Mr. Basso won't mind, we would like to typify this anthology as "the Stanford collection." Mr. Stegner, who teaches the fiction craft

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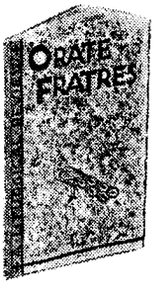
—Pope Pius XII



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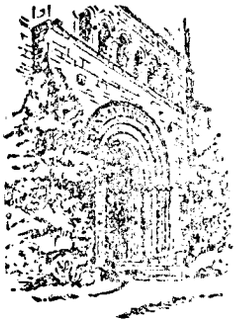

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at Stanford, carried off first prize and has as ushers the stories of two of his students.

By and large, they're all skilful and interesting stories. But after you read them, put them up on the closet shelf where Junior can't get at them for a few years.

JOE DEVER.

The Republic of Israel: Its History and Its Promise. Joseph Dunner. Whittlesey House. $4.75.

ONE opens this book with the hope of finding a considered history of the state of Israel, a critical evaluation of its origins and prospects, but one closes it disappointed. Yet one need not wait so long nor read so far to recognize the face of partisanship, for it is obvious that to Dr. Dunner the Jews are almost always in the right and the others in the wrong. Dr. Dunner must have anticipated such a criticism, for in his preface he declares that the objectivity which is the duty of the scientist, and in particular of the political scientist, cannot be had by shunning expressions of preference. "Within the scope of my studies," he states, "I have always taken sides." With this I have no quarrel—quite the opposite. Objectivity is not neutrality. But the stand one takes must be arrived at with pain and not ease, profoundly, not superficially. Whether the author speaks of the friction between England and the state of Israel about to be born, the problem of Jerusalem, the tension among the political parties of Israel, or its religious policy, his solutions are much too facile.

Dr. Dunner is at his most unfortunate in his first chapter, "The Diaspora." There one finds lines like these: "It is very likely that Jesus had many heated arguments with the leaders of Jewish orthodoxy, as did Spinoza and others in later centuries," which indicates that the author lacks a sense of distinctions. Or: "Three hundred years after the death of the Nazarene, the God of Israel had suddenly become —in the literature of the Church— an abusive God of vengeance, who demanded an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. . . . Suppressed was the Jewish belief that God forgives to the thousandth generation, that His justice is mingled with mercy. . . . In the teachings of the Church, Israel's God-idea, the God of the universe, had retrogressed to the very beginnings of Jewish history. It was depicted as a belief in a tribal Jehovah, a sort of idol of an arrogant race that claimed to be the chosen people." Apart from the fact that "God-idea" is an un-Jewish expression, if ever I heard one, Dr. Dunner is so confused that he attributes to the Church the thoughts of her enemies. It was Marcion, the first heretic to be condemned in Rome, and not the Church, who taught that the God of the Old Testament was not the God of the New, but a harsh God, a God of vengeance. Voltaire, David Friedrich Strauss, Wellhausen, all the higher critics (and with them Dr. Dunner, at least in his ideas on the beginnings of Jewish his-

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tory), see in Jahwe a tribal deity—but never the Church. Her god is the God of Israel, to whom she sings in Advent, for instance: "O Adonai and Ruler of the house of Israel . . . come and redeem us." Far from suppressing it, she holds so dear the Jewish belief in forgiveness and mercy that her favorite plea is David's "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy."

Such "facility" and inaccuracies make it impossible to recommend this book.

JOHN M. OESTERREICHER.

The Phasian Bird. Henry Williamson. Little Brown. $4.
River Diary. Dorothea Eastwood. Houghton Mifflin. $3.
The Eyes of Discovery. John Bakeless. Lippincott. $5.

THE term "nature book" is a spacious one, covering almost any sort of work in which the author is concerned with earth, sky, animals, vetetation . . . in short, the Garden of the Creation. We are all permanently entranced, of course, by that extraordinary Garden. It is where our primal heart is; and "nature books," when they're good ones, are nearly irresistible. Three new good ones are at hand.

The books of Henry Williamson, a hardly-disguised poet whose passion for English nature has produced a shelf-full of gravely lovely, meditative novels and non-fiction, are by now so well known that his new novel needs little comment. The story of a pheasant, it catches and weaves together, after Williamson's familiar fashion, several other stories —of wild creatures and of human creatures interacting — and it tells these tales, somber and beautiful, in a carefully wrought and cadenced prose that either ensorcerizes the reader or eventually slightly irritates him, depending on his taste for this sort of thing. Henry Williamson is definitely (and, it may be, a little self-consciously) in the tradition of the great English nature-writers. *The Phasian Bird* is his mixture as before, but with an intensification, for good or ill, of his familiar mood and mannerisms.

Mrs. Eastwood is modest. She and her family have spent many seasons on a salmon river near the Welsh border, and *River Diary* is the edited journal of their happy adventures and observations there. It is a nature book that speaks quietly, unpretentiously, and with tremendous charm. This is one of those books, it is safe to bet, that is going to win a devoted following. It deserves to. The Eastwoods are first-rate nature observers, accomplished gatherers of the poetry of earth (Mrs. Eastwood's book brings together so many and such excellent excerpts that it is almost an anthology), and altogether an uncommonly winning family. *River Diary* has something of the quality of Alfred Noyes' *Orchard's Bay,* which the cherishers of that thoughtful and garden-fragrant work will know as high commendation.

It is astonishing that no one has previously done the job undertaken by John Bakeless in *The Eyes of Discovery.* Also, it's perhaps just as well; for it is difficult to think that anyone else would have done it as excellently. Sub-titled "America as Seen by the First Explorer," this fat and handsome volume presents, in a combination of their own words and the illuminating connective and interpretive words of John Bakeless, a richly detailed picture of America as our land did indeed appear to the first eyes to look upon it. Here is the whole pageant of our wildlife and wilderness, as observed and recorded by all the pioneers from the first white discoverers to the first westward-pushing travellers to reach California. It makes a wonderfully rich book, uniquely evocative of the unspoiled American earth. It belongs not only on all nature-lovers' shelves, but on all Americans'.

ALAN DEVOE.

The Emergence of Lincoln. 2 volumes. Allan Nevins. Scribner. $12.50.

THESE two volumes, complete in themselves, are also a sequel to the author's two previous volumes entitled *Ordeal of the Union.* The ones just published deal with the period 1857-1861; the "Ordeal of the Union" is concerned with the years 1846-1856. Although Lincoln's name appears in the title of the new set, the work is much more than a biographical treatment of Lincoln. In fact, there is much more space devoted to Douglas, in the first volume, than to Lincoln. Nevins gives a sympathetic treatment to Douglas, as do most recent writers on the period. Lincoln does receive much space in the second volume, but the work is a history of the pre-Civil War period, not a biography of Lincoln. Unforgettable biographical material, however, is given concerning John Brown and many other men of the period.

The volumes are neither northern nor southern in viewpoint. Packed with facts, the books are characterized by an approach that is at all times fresh, incisive, and objective. The author does not believe that the war was unavoidable; he gives many convincing reasons why it could and should have been avoided. One of the most comprehensive bibliographies relative to all types of publications relating to the pre-Civil War period, as well as a detailed index, increase the exceptional merits of this contribution to our knowledge of mid-nineteenth century America.

PAUL KINIERY.

• REVIEWERS •

JOE DEVER is now living in Monte Vista, Colorado. He is working on a novel to be published in the spring.

REV. JOHN M. OESTERREICHER is a priest of the New York archdiocese.

ALAN DEVOE is the author of five nature books. His *Introduction to Animals* will be published next autumn.

PAUL KINIERY is assistant dean of the graduate school of Loyola University, Chicago.

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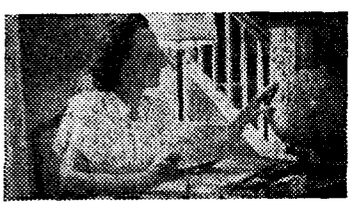
"Back in 1942 I joined the Payroll Savings Plan at the U. S. Naval Ordnance Plant where I work as an executive secretary. I put 10% of my salary into bonds to help win the war. And I still buy bonds."



"Through careful managing, the twins and I have lived comfortably and saved too. This fall the twins will enter Butler University—thanks to U. S. Savings Bonds, the best way to save I know!"

HOW U. S. SAVINGS BONDS ARE PAYING OFF FOR MRS. MARY CALLON OF INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

"Meet Janet and Jack, my *twin* reasons for buying bonds," says Mary Callon. "Even though I'm a widow, these children are going to have a college education. The U. S. Savings Bonds I bought will see them through!"

Mrs. Callon's story can be your story, too!

What Mary Callon did, you can do, too—and just as easily! Just take these three simple steps—*today:*

1. *Make one big decision—to put saving* first, *before you even touch your income.*

2. *Decide to save a regular amount* systematically, *week after week, or month after month.*

3. *Start saving automatically by signing up* today *in the Payroll Savings Plan where you work or the Bond-A-Month Plan where you bank. You may save as little as $1.25 a week or as much as $375 a month. If you can set aside just $7.50 weekly, in 10 years you'll have bonds and interest worth $4,329.02 cash!*

You'll be providing security not only for yourself and your family but for the free way of life that's so important to us all. And in far less time than you think, your plans will turn into reality, just as Mary Callon's are doing.

FOR YOUR SECURITY, AND YOUR COUNTRY'S TOO, *SAVE NOW*—THROUGH REGULAR PURCHASE OF U. S. SAVINGS BONDS!

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